

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

September 22, 1976

No. 455

PC#114

PRESS CONFERENCE
BY THE HONORABLE HENRY A. KISSINGER
SECRETARY OF STATE
KINSHASA, ZAIRE
SEPTEMBER 22, 1976

QUESTION: What did you discuss with our president?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: We had a very friendly and cordial talk in which we reviewed primarily the situation in southern Africa. After this press conference we will have another meeting over lunch in which we will discuss primarily U.S.-Zairian bilateral relationships. I reported to the President about the diplomatic steps that have been taken to attempt to ease the situation in southern Africa and to bring progress towards independence and majority rule. Of course I had kept the President informed throughout, by letters and cables and we had a very good exchange of views on the situation in southern Africa and throughout Africa.

QUESTION: We will have a chance to ask President Mobutu later but do you now feel you have the support of the Zairian Government in your plan to set up negotiations in southern Africa?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Of course the President will have to answer for himself, but I had the impression of being given great encouragement.

QUESTION: One has the impression that your government attempts to avoid direct contact with African nationalists. What is your government doing for the African nationalists?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: This is not correct. Our position is that the problems of Africa should be dealt with by Africans and therefore we have asked all super powers to avoid contact with the African nationalist movements and to permit the African presidents to deal directly with the nationalist movements. On this basis and on this basis alone do we believe that the evolution of Africa can be in African hands. We will meet with African nationalist movements if the African presidents ask us, but we do not want super powers or anybody else to begin supporting one group against another because this will export the rivalries of the super powers into the continent and it will prevent these nationalist movements from pursuing nationalist objectives. So we have given the leadership of these various conflicts in Africa to the African presidents and we are working through the African presidents.

QUESTION: But still, Mr. Secretary, you do not hesitate to have direct contact with the holders of power of white rule in southern Africa?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: When I was in south Africa I talked to a group of

For further information contact:

black leaders, many of whom were in strong opposition, in fact all of whom were in strong opposition, to the governmental leaders, and members of my party talked to other black leaders, so in South Africa I made it a point to talk to the leaders of the black and colored community.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, can you confirm that Ian Smith has accepted the principle of the accession of the majority to rule?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: For me to perform the function that I am trying to exercise it is important that I do not speak for the parties and permit the parties to speak for themselves. I have indicated that I believe considerable progress has been made. I think it is clear that majority rule is the objective, so I will wait until Mr. Smith has spoken for himself -- which I understand will take place on Friday -- but I have indicated that in my judgment considerable progress has been made.

QUESTION: The last time we were here, sir, there was great concern about the presence of Cuban troops in Angola which is a neighboring state. Could you tell us now what the situation is with respect to the situation is respect to the Cubans in Angola?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: We have no clear indications. We received reports of some having been withdrawn, maybe on the order of 2,000 to 3,000 but on the other hand we also have reports of many civilians coming into replace them. The withdrawal of the Cuban troops, if there has been any, has not been strategically significant because over 10,000 still remain and we remain concerned about an African country whose government can sustain itself only by the presence of an expeditionary force from across the ocean.

QUESTION: Since your talks with President Nyerere, have you communicated any further views of the black African presidents to the Smith regime in order to provide any further clarification which would produce a positive decision by the Rhodesian white minority?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: As part of my efforts here I attempt to make sure that all of the parties know what the other parties are thinking. I have conveyed through the South Africans my understanding of the thinking of President Kaunda as well as of President Nyerere to the Rhodesian authorities so that they can take it into their consideration as they make their decisions this week.

QUESTION: You've talked about Rhodesia. Now I should like to know what you have resolved about Namibia.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The discussions about Namibia are still in progress. Everybody agrees that progress has been made. The United States is in favor of the participation of all the authentic groups, including SWAPO, in any discussions concerning Namibia. We are also in favor of a UN role in this and I believe that progress has been made towards achieving these objectives as well as South Africa's role in the discussions. The precise relationship of the various groups to each other in these negotiations still remains to be worked out but we are hopeful that in the weeks ahead we can make further progress towards the objective of setting up a conference about

-3-

the independence of Namibia. Before we end the press conference I want to say that in my discussions with President Mobutu he suggested that it would be important that the OAU be formally informed about the results of our efforts in southern Africa. I accepted his suggestions and I will send an emissary to see the President of the OAU to inform him of the efforts that have taken place during the last week.

QUESTION: Who is the President of the OAU?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: That's the Prime Minister of Mauritius.

* * * * *